

MOTIVATIONS AND MANAGEMENT FACTORS OF VOLUNTEER WORK IN NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to review and discuss the literature about volunteers' motivations to donate their time to NPOs and the management factors that can influence volunteer work.

Firstly, the paper illustrates and compares the different types of motivation followed by a presentation of a typology that organises the volunteers' motivations into four types: (i) altruism, (ii) belonging, (iii) ego and social recognition and (iv) development and learning. Secondly we discuss the key management factors in volunteering: recruitment, training and rewarding. Finally, we present four gaps in the literature that justify the scope for further research: (i) omission of differences between motivations related to volunteers' "Attraction" versus "Retention"; (ii) focus of the research on the USA, UK and Australia context; (iii) absence of comparative analyses that relate motivations by NPO types and (iv) comprehension of how management factors (recruitment, training and rewarding) influence volunteers' satisfaction and retention.

KEY WORDS

Motivations, Management factors, Volunteers, NPO's (Nonprofit Organisations)

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Shin and Kleiner (2003), a volunteer is an individual that offers his/her service to a certain organisation, without expecting monetary compensation, a service that might bring benefits for him/her and for others. According to the United Nations, volunteer activity is not undertaken for financial gain, it is undertaken of one's own free will and it brings benefits to a third party as well as to the people who is volunteering. Voluntarism is not a recent phenomenon (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). Many organisations depend exclusively on volunteer work. Many people have already dedicated or dedicate some of their free time to some volunteer cause. For example, Wilson & Pimm (1996) show that in Great Britain about 39% of the adult population has been involved in some volunteer activity for some period of time. In the USA these values reach 50% (Wilson & Pimm, 1996), though in Spain they only represent 5% (Beerli, Díaz & Martín, 2004). In Portugal, Franco, Sokolowski, Hairel & Salamon (2005) show that the civil society sector is an economic force and it engages nearly a quarter of a million full-time¹ equivalent workers, nearly 70% in paid positions and the remainder as volunteers. According to these authors this represents about 4.2% of the country's economically active population and about 5% of its non-agricultural employment. (http://www.jhu.edu/~cnp/pdf/Portugal_Nat_Rpt_Portuguese.pdf, January 2009)

The practices of volunteer management can influence and explain, in several ways, different aspects of volunteers behaviour (Cnaan & Cascio, 1998). When volunteers join organisations, their needs and expectations are diverse, they have diverse backgrounds, interests, skills and experiences (Cuskelly & Auld, 2000a). Consequently their motives, levels of commitment and involvement in an organisation, as well as the benefits they expect from this experience and the time they will dedicate to an organisation will vary enormously (Cuskelly & Auld, 2000a). In order to effectively manage volunteers it is very important that managers understand the motivations that can influence them (Anderson, 2005). Organisations need to be aware to the link between understanding the motivation of volunteers and the need to take action to attract and maintain their motivation (Anderson, 2005).

Organisations can no longer afford to treat volunteers as well-meaning amateurs, but need to provide them with skills to the point where they emerge as trained, professional, unpaid members of staff (Cunningham, 1999). Professional management of volunteer programs is essential to overcome barriers to involvement in volunteering (Cuthill & Warburton, 2005).

Organisations can motivate people to stay goal-focused and loyal, but we know that organisational turnover is a fact of life (Watson & Abzug, 2005). Costs of voluntary turnover can be very debilitating since they may lead to starting over the recruitment, selecting and even training processes (Watson & Abzug, 2005). There is also the disruption of organisation's processes, culture and other constituents when old faces disappear, so the traditional advice to managers indicate a correlation between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover (Watson & Abzug, 2005).

In this paper we review and discuss the literature about volunteers' motivations to donate their time to Nonprofit organisations and we discuss the management factors that can influence volunteer work.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Motivations

For many organisations, volunteers represent a large part of the workforce and smaller organisations sometimes rely exclusively on volunteer work (Jäger, Schmidt & Beyes, 2007). Some organisations do not need to make a big effort to attract volunteers, although this process is difficult for the majority (Wilson & Pimm 1996). According to the same authors, organisations with some prestige only need to issue an invitation to quickly get volunteers (Wilson & Pimm 1996). These authors also mention that other groups where recruitment

¹ ETI- equivalent to full time, measure that is equivalent to an agent that works in a full time schedule.

represents no difficulty are those where there is a definitive measurable benefit such as music concerts. However, the communication task that the organisation needs to develop in order to attract and retain volunteers must consider the variety of factors that influence individuals and make them donate their time to voluntarism programs (Dolnicar & Randle, 2007). Brudney & Kellough (2000), addressing state government agencies, show that there is inability to attract a sufficient number of volunteers to meet agency needs. Other studies of volunteer use in the public sector agree that attracting volunteers is perhaps the most serious obstacle to the successful implementation of the approach (Brudney & Kellough, 2000). Thus, when an organisation understands the motives that make an individual donate his/her time, volunteer experience might be enriched (Trogdon, 2005).

The extensive literature on organisational behaviour of paid employees cannot be applied to volunteer work because there are key differences between the two groups involved (Ferreira, Proença & Proença, 2008). Motivations derived from studies on professional individuals represent important and indispensable foundations for the understanding of motivations in the area of voluntarism. However, many questions distinguish the nature of the volunteer work. In the first place, rewards associated with work are completely different. For most people, financial rewards are critical for their quality of life and their survival. However, volunteers can draw aside this form of rewards (Brudney & Kellough, 2000), demanding from NPO's management techniques focused on the understanding of motivations and benefits associated with this work (Wilson & Pimm, 1996). These authors consider that the "useful life" of a volunteer can be limited by a purpose, a specific organisation or a certain period of time. According to Kotler (1975), volunteers require no reward other than appreciation. Wilson (2000) argues that the desire for appreciation and recognition of the work is associated with the superior levels of the Maslow theory of human needs (1943, 1987), i.e., to social needs - belonging and self-fulfilment - release of potential or to the motivation factors according to the hygiene-motivation theory of Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1959). If volunteers' motivations have this type of framing, should we expect a larger work commitment from this group and, consequently, better performance compared to regular employees? The altruism of volunteers is not false nor can it be forgotten. However, it would be unreal to assume that it is the main reason or the only reason (Wilson & Pimm, 1996; Jäger, Schmidt & Beyes, 2007).

Table 1 summarises the analyses done by Ferreira, Proença & Proença (2008) about the volunteer work. The analysis evidences four categories: (i) altruism, (ii) belonging, (iii) ego and social recognition and (iv) development and learning. Note that categories are not stanch, might exist situations that belong to more than one motivational category. Table 1 underlines this question with hatch lines in the categories frontiers.

Motivations related to **altruism** are the most frequently cited in the literature: the reasons are related to "helping others" (Cavalier, 2006), "sense of mission" (Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005) or "to do something worthwhile" (Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2001). "Help the hospital" might be motivated by altruism or by a social contact search, so it may be included in belonging category.

Belonging includes elements such as making new friends, meeting people (Anderson & Shaw, 1999) or to be accepted by the community (Holmberg & Söderlung, 2005). "Belong to a club" might be, simultaneously, a motivation that is in this category if the volunteer looks for conviviality, but might be included in ego and social recognition if the volunteer searches for status or social recognition.

However, volunteers may have expectations of rewards or benefits associated with voluntarism. Rewards and benefits assume different forms, but are related to **ego and social recognition**. For example, Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, (2005) show that individuals expect voluntarism to compensate them and that can be a reliable source of satisfaction, respect and recognition, a source of status, of personal enrichment, widening of horizons and a form of occupying free time with quality. Some motives might be related to more than one category, for example "be useful to the community" might be classified as belonging if the volunteer has the objective of

be accepted in the community, but if the volunteer is looking for value recognised by the community so this motivation might belong to ego and social recognition.

Many individuals consider that voluntarism will be able to have a positive impact in their learning process, enrichment and broadening horizons (Trogdon, 2005). These individuals consider that these reasons are the most important reason that justifies the donation of time and we group them in **development and learning** category. Two final examples of motivational duality are “professional career” and “knowledge and be more involved with government programs” that might be classified in this category if they are mostly a source of accomplishments and increased knowledge, and might be included in social recognition if they are mostly a source of social progression.

TABLE 1
The most important motivations of volunteers

MOTIVATIONS TYPES	MOTIVATIONS	AUTHORS
ALTRUISM	Help others	Cavalier, 2006; Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2002; Holmberg & Söderlung, 2005; Anderson & Shaw, 1999; Prouteau & Wolff, 2007; Trogdon, 2005
	To do something worthwhile	Edwards, 2005; Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 200
	Sense of mission	Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005; Clary et al, 1998
	Organisation helps those in need	Yavas & Riecken, 1977
	Altruism (worries with nature)	Caissie & Halpenny, 2003
	Solidarity – help who needs	Figueiredo, 2005
	Help the hospital (altruist)	Andersen, 2003
BELONGING	Social contact (make new friends, meet people, sense of belonging)	Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2002; Anderson & Shaw, 1999; Edwards, 2005; Kemp, 2002; Cavalier, 2006; Prouteau & Wolff, 2007; Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005; Clary et al, 1998
	Fun and travel	Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Kim, Chelladurai & Trail, 2007
	Be accepted by the community	Holmberg & Söderlung, 2004
	Contact people with same interests	Caissie & Halpenny, 2003
	Belong to a club	Witteck, 2004
	Give and be useful to my community	Edwards, 2005; Figueiredo, 2005; Trogdon, 2005
EGO AND	Interest in organisations activities	Edwards, 2005; Anderson & Shaw, 1999;
	Qualitative filling of leisure time	Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005; Yavas & Riecken, 1997; Edwards, 2005

SOCIAL RECOGNITION	Feelings of self-worth, new confidence, satisfaction, respect and recognition	Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005; Kemp, 2002; Soupourmas & Ironmonger, 2002; Clary et al, 1998
	Knowledge and be more involved with government programs	Trogon, 2005
	Professional career	Andersen, 2003; Cavalier, 2006; Kemp, 2002; Sinclair, Dowson & Thistleton-Martin, 2006; Clary et al, 1998
DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	New challenges, experiences	Caissie & Halpenny, 2003
	Learn	Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Kemp, 2002; Trogon, 2005
	Keep my profession	Figueiredo, 2005
	Enrichment and broadening horizons	Vitner, Shalom & Yodfat, 2005; Edwards, 2005; Kemp, 2002

Source: Author

2.2 Management Factors

Prior to the 1980s, interest in management within the voluntary sector was seen as minimal given that practitioners considered themselves as different from the for profit sector, and most appeared satisfied with an approach to management based on principles of goodwill, flexibility, informality, commitment and natural ability (Cunningham, 1999). The essence of the sector was voluntarism, philanthropy, compassion and a concern with the public good (Anheier, 2000). From the 1980s, the move towards more professional management practice seemed inevitable (Willis, 1991), because “good intentions” were not enough and more attention had to be paid to business disciplines (Cunningham, 1999). Nowadays, the nonprofit organisations growth stresses the need for guidelines and expert advice on how to effectively manage these organisations (Drucker, 1990).

Professional management is not only about giving power, short-term aims and profitability, i.e. according to Dartington (1991: 30) “management is not a dirty word any more” since voluntary organisations are expressions of awareness, the emphasis on professional management is welcome (Dartington, 1991). This shift towards professionalisation can be viewed as a necessary change to produce higher quality services (Chater, 2008), without forgetting the specificities of the voluntary sector (Franco *et al.*, 2005; Paton & Cornforth, 1991). Like other organisations, nonprofit organisations vary in terms of mission, size, mode of operation and impact, Anheier (2000) say that nonprofit organisations are discovering management because they are no longer the trivial and inconsequential organisation. Although they are large and important enough to influence economic and political scenarios, nonprofit management is not completely healthy because it is still fairly new (Anheier, 2000). At the same time, according to the same author, while nonprofit organisations are subject to subtler business cycles, which stress current inexperience, things are changing and many nonprofit are facing greater uncertainty, leading to a greater emphasis to management. Planning and managing for improved outcomes require a clear understanding of the volunteer and the volunteering environment (Cuthill & Warburton, 2005). Voluntary organisations might gain from adopting private sector based theories and managerial tools concerning personnel management (Cunningham, 1999). “Management of the voluntary sector has to account for the diversity of motivations and agendas on the part of volunteers.” (Cunningham, 1999: 21). Cnaan & Cascio (1998) major findings relate to the fact that changes in volunteer performance variables, especially volunteer satisfaction and tenure can, in part, be explained by practices of volunteer management.

In Table 2 we present a synthesis of the types of management factors that are referred in the literature. We divide these types in six categories: training, rewards, recruiting, supervision, communication and team environment.

TABLE 2
Types of Management Factors

MANAGEMENT FACTORS	AUTHORS
TRAINING	Amos-Wilson (1996); Brudney & Kellough (2000); Catts & Chamings (2006); Costa, Chalip & Green (2006); Cunningham (1999); Cuskelly & Auld (2000b); Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye & Darcy (2006); Edwards (2005); Hager & Brudney (2004); Hartenian, 2007; Jäger, Schmidt & Beyes (2007); Jago & Deery (2002); Lulewicz in Connors (1995); McCurley in Herman (2005); Nunes, Reto & Carneiro (2001); Osborne in Billis & Harris (1996); Ryan, Kaplan & Grese (2001); Shin & Kleiner (2003); Smith & Gay (2005); Wilson & Pimm (1996); Woods (2006)
REWARDS	Brudney (1990); Brudney in Herman (2005); Cnaan & Cascio (1998); Edwards (2005); Farrell, Johnston & Twynam (1998); Hager & Brudney (2004); Hartenian, 2007; Holmberg & Söderlung (2005); Jäger, Schmidt & Beyes (2007); Little (1999); Peach & Murrel in Connors (1995); Philips, Little & Goodine (2002); Shin & Kleiner (2003); Smith & Gay (2005); Woods (2006)
RECRUITING	Bradner in Connors (1995); Brudney & Kellough (2000); Brudney (1990); Cuskelly & Auld (2000a); Edwards (2005); Hartenian, 2007; Jago & Deery (2002); McCurley in Herman (2005); Philips, Little & Goodine (2002); Shin & Kleiner (2003); Watson & Abzug in Herman (2005); Willis in Batsleer, Cornforth & Paton (1991); Wilson & Pimm (1996); Woods (2006)
SUPERVISION	Brudney & Kellough (2000); Brudney (1990); Brudney in Herman (2005); Cuskelly & Auld (2000b); Hager & Brudney (2004); McCurley in Herman (2005)
COMMUNICATION	Edwards (2005); Farrell, Johnston & Twynam (1998); Philips, Little & Goodine (2002); Woods (2006)
TEAM ENVIRONMENT	Jago & Deery (2002); Woods (2006)

Source: Authors

Table 2 shows a large range of management factors. Some of them, namely, recruitment, training and rewards, are strongly cited while others have few studies supporting them. Furthermore this three management factors can have a stronger influence in volunteers. For example, according to Cuthill & Warburton (2005) recruitment and training are key engagement points where organisations have a significant degree of control over the volunteer experience. As a result of social, economic and political changes, a number of trends have emerged that have highlighted the importance and the need to review and develop volunteer training to ensure it adequately (Deslandes & Rogers, 2008). A well trained and developed workforce of volunteers is more critical to the successful performances of the volunteer management system than any other single factor (Deslandes & Rogers, 2008).

Many organisations think that what volunteers bring them is a “gift” for which nothing is required in return and this is different from the employees to which payment is expected in return of the work done. However it is clear from research into volunteer motivation (Ferreira, Proença & Proença, 2008) that most volunteers do not see themselves as bringing a gift to an organisation but they come to make an “exchange” (Willis, 1991). Of course this will influence management task as managers will need to ensure that volunteers gain some returns or benefits that they expect in order to secure their continuing commitment (Willis, 1991).

The management task is to try to ensure that the volunteer achieves a successful life cycle during his/her time with the organisation (Willis, 1991). Some models were used to describe the ways in which volunteer involvement in an organisation develops. Willis (1991) uses a three stages model, where we can see an evolution in the volunteer career. Therefore, the management task is to identify stages in the life cycle of volunteers and to facilitate their successful development within the cycle and the organisation. The stages of the model include:

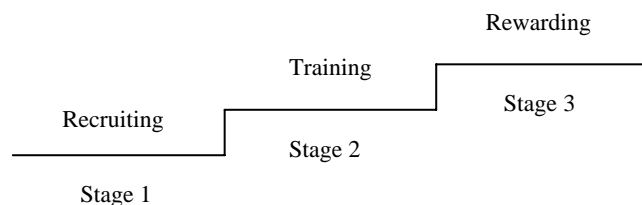
→ An exploratory stage (divided in exploring, committing and trying) where volunteers examine the worthiness of the organisation, the people with whom they will work with and what they have to offer;

→ A developmental stage (divided in analysing, improving and blooming) where the volunteer has decided to stay and to get involved so they will be in contact with new persons and situations and this will contribute for improve their skills and qualities, allowing organisations to meet their goals; and

→ A mature stage (divided in sharing and leading) where a volunteer is making a maximum contribution, has responsibilities and might be ready to share skills and experiences with others or to take a position of leadership.

Cuthill & Warburton (2005) use a conceptual framework that outline three key engagement points through which the organisation can have an important control over the volunteer experience. These engagement points are during recruitment, training and volunteer work (Cuthill & Warburton, 2005). Inspired in these two models, one related with the life cycle of a volunteer (Willis, 1991) and the other related with engagement points of volunteers (Cuthill & Warburton, 2005) we present a scheme that outlines the stages of volunteer involvement highlighting management factors that can characterise each stage.

FIGURE 1
Volunteer involvement stages



Source: Authors

The selection of a volunteer is the beginning of a long-term management task, so stage 1 represents an exploratory level where the volunteer is examining the importance of the organisation. Thus, it is important that the organisation uses an adequate plan for recruiting (Willis, 1991). Stage 2 is a developmental stage for the volunteer (Willis, 1991). Having decided to stay and getting involved, the volunteer might need some training and situations which will bring him/her skills and intrinsic worth are very important, enabling the organisation to pursue its goals (Willis, 1991). Towards the end of this stage the volunteer's confidence may be such that he/she begins to feel undervalued and unappreciated, so recognizing and rewarding volunteers achievements is fundamental and that is what is stressed in stage 3, a more mature level where we expect volunteers to make their maximum contribution (Willis, 1991).

3. DISCUSSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the presented literature about motivations and management factors we argue that the decision to volunteer and to continue in this activity can have different explanations which are not deeply explored. We have identified some critical issues in the literature: (i) omission of differences between motivations related to volunteers' "Attraction" versus "Retention"; (ii) focus of the investigations, in terms of motivations and management factors, in the North American, English and Australian context; (iii) absence of comparative analyses that relate motivations by NPO types and (iv) lack in the comprehension of how management factors (recruitment, training and rewarding) influence volunteers' satisfaction and retention.

(i) When a volunteer is satisfied with his experience, the probability of continuing to collaborate with a certain organisation is higher (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). However, are the reasons that attract volunteers the same as those that keep them in the organisation, or not? For example, an individual may, in the first place, decide to become a volunteer for reasons related to his

professional career, but later his stimulus for remaining as a volunteer might be very different, such as the need for social interaction. These types of differences are not clear in the literature. In conclusion, volunteer satisfaction is fundamental in retaining these individuals in organisations and for that understanding their motivations it is essential (Trogdon, 2005). Thus, research that studies and differentiates motivations associated with volunteers' "attraction" and "retention", in NPOs, is justified. The analysis of these data might have implications in the way that NPOs undertake recruitment, management and retention of volunteers in the organisation.

(ii) On the other hand, most of the research emerges from the USA, UK, Australia or Canada. Research in Europe is scarce, despite the UK case. The culture and country context can be important in individuals' motivations (Hofstede, 1980; Steers & Sanchez-Runde, 2002). The understanding of the country and of the people's culture, as well as the present management practices is also a fundamental principle (Erez & Earley, 1993). The motivation standards and management factors mentioned in the literature have many cultural influences from USA, UK and Australia. Therefore, we suggest further research in other geographical contexts, such as in other European countries.

(iii) The motivation type can also be related to the NPO type. However, the presented research was mostly conducted in organisations connected to sport, to environment or art (specifically in museums), and this can influence the motivation type identified in the literature. Therefore, it is important to verify whether these volunteers' motivations are identified in other types of organisation, such as NPOs dedicated to poverty, child support and/or adults with difficulties, health, etc., just to mention some illustrative examples where voluntarism research is scarce. The studies that include volunteers from different organisation types are also scarce, leaving space for research focusing on comparative analyses.

(iv) "Future work should explore further the relationship between affective commitment and volunteers' sense of community and job satisfaction, particularly the ways the management and training of volunteers affects that relationship." (Costa, Chalip & Green, 2006: 178). Different reasons can explain volunteers' commitment and satisfaction and we can find the recruitment process as an essential element because volunteers must go through a rigorous recruitment process where the coordinators explain what is required of them in terms of their time and expected weekly or yearly hours (Edwards, 2005). At the same time opportunities to share opinions and experiences during training helps to build volunteers' sense of community and that can lead to increased satisfaction with the job (Costa, Chalip & Green, 2006). In the work of Philips, Little & Goodine (2002) we can see the importance of rewards since volunteers refer it as one of the most important type of support that organisations can give to their efforts.

4. CONCLUSION

Considering voluntarism as a substantial part of productive work for many societies, and, considering the benefits that voluntarism can bring to an organisation, the paper argues that more attention must be devoted to this phenomenon, in particular to the phenomenon of formal voluntarism. The paper evidences the importance of voluntary work and its impact on society, in particular in NPOs. We review the main literature about individuals' motivations and management factors that can influence volunteers' work. We present a typology that groups volunteers' motivations into 4 categories: altruism, belonging, ego and social recognition and, finally, development and learning and we select the management factors that we consider more influents – recruiting, training and rewarding. Finally, we identify four gaps in the literature that justify further research: research focusing on the differences between motivations related to volunteers' "Attraction" versus "Retention"; research in European countries, research that relates motivations to NPO typos and, finally research that help the comprehension of how management factors (recruitment, training and rewarding) influence volunteers' satisfaction and retention. These questions may achieve important answers to NPO's organisations, mainly to volunteers' satisfaction and retention.

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